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Interview with Luis Wong from LEAP Game Studios on the Video Game *Tunche*

by gameenvironments

**Abstract**
Interview with Luis Wong from LEAP Game Studios on the video game *Tunche*.

**Keywords:** Interview, Game Developer, *Tunche*, LEAP Game Studios, gameenvironments

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**Q1: Who is behind LEAP Game Studios? When was it founded, by whom, and why?**

LEAP Game Studios was founded in August 2012, by four friends in their early 20’s (Michael Barclay, Phillip Chu Joy, Renzo Castro and Luis Wong). We participated in a game jam together and someone offered me the chance to make a game for his company, so we started a company and made that game. We were one of the first Peruvian studios who developed a game for consoles, in 2015, and also the first one to have a game on PS Plus. Also, we were the first ones who signed a contract with a publisher for an original IP game and we hope we can release it on all platforms.
Q2: What is the idea behind your video game Tunche? What is unique about it?

Tunche (forthc.) is a beat’em up you can play with up to four players, alone or in co-op mode. We want to make an action game that has a different setting, in this case the Amazon jungle. We think it’s unique in the sense that it uses hand drawn animation and we’ve put a lot of emphasis on combat mechanic, all while having the game set in the Amazon rainforest. Also, it’s probably the biggest independent game made in Peru.

Tunche is an Amazon rainforest monster, a myth, that haunts people entering the rainforest. We wanted to give a different meaning for it, that will be displayed along the adventure. Most of the elements of gameplay are also deeply connected with myths and folklore from the Amazon. We took some licenses but the inspiration comes directly from it.
Q3: In *Tunche* your journey leads you through the Amazon Rainforest and you meet fantastic creatures on your way. Was there a specific reason you choose this hand-drawn art style and setting for *Tunche*?

We wanted to have polished graphics to differentiate from other games of the genre. Also, our artists were specialized in this type of animation, so we didn’t want to try something else. It’s important as we wanted to have a nice representation of the Amazon rainforest.

Additionally, to this unique representation of the Amazonian rainforest, the players will learn more about Peruvian and Latin American legends and myths during the game. For example, one playable character is Rumi, who was chosen from her tribe as spiritual leader and is looking for *Tunche* in the wilderness of the Amazonian jungle. Another one is the mythical creature Boutu, a giant dolphin you have to fight during the game.
Q4: Why did you decide to launch a Kickstarter Campaign to fund the game?

Primarily for visibility. We already had the funds for making the game from our publisher but we wanted to see if the game was attractive to players. Also, some extra funds would help us to make the game better than we could with the initial budget.

Figure 3. *Tunche* © LEAP Game Studios.

Q5: What does the Peruvian video game development scene look like?

It’s pretty small, less than 10 studios working 100% on games. We know each other well and hope there are great games coming soon from Peru. We hope that with this game, and through interviews like this one, more people will know about our game and about the game developer scene in Peru.
Q6: In what way do you decide on new endeavors, f.e. do you follow an established process regarding how you formulate your projects?

We have a standardized process, anyone can pitch at any moment but there are gates: pitch, prototype before pre-production and then a vertical slice before going to production. Right at the moment, Tunche Arena (2019), a free standalone version of the upcoming game, is available on Steam.

References

Tunche Arena, 2019. [video game] (Microsoft) LEAP Game Studios, HypeTrain Digital.

Tunche, (forthc.) [video game] LEAP Game Studios, HypeTrain Digital.